

IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THE ARMY VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (2008-2009)

1. Purpose:

These instructions implement the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), DoD Directive 1000.4 and provide information necessary for the conduct of the Army Voting Assistance Program (AR 608-20) during the 2008/2009 election years. The program's principal purposes are to make registration and voting information, materials, and assistance readily available to all eligible Army voters and provide them every opportunity and encouragement to register and vote in Federal, State and Local elections.

2. References:

a. Publications:

- (1) AR 608-20, Army Voting Assistance Program, 28 Oct 04.
- (2) Voting Assistance Guide – 2008-2009 (Misc. Pub 360-02).
- (3) DoD Directive 1000.4, Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), 14 Apr 04.
- (4) DoD Directive 1344.10, Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty, 2 Aug 04.
- (5) 5 C.F.R. Part 734, Political Activities of Federal Employees.
- (6) DoD 5500.7-R, Joint Ethics Regulation, Chapter 6, Section 2, Paragraphs 6-200–6-205, Political Activities of Civilian DoD Employees, 30 Aug 93 .
- (7) AR 360-1, The Army Public Affairs Program, 15 Sep 00.
- (8) AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, 13 May 02.
- (9) Sections 608 and 609 of Title 18, United States Code.
- (10) Collateral Duty Appointment to Installation Voting Assistance Officer, dated 30 Jul 07.
- (11) Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Guidance in Implementing Voting Assistance programs, dated 19 Sep 07.

b. Forms:

- (1) Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA).

(2) Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB).

3. Concept:

a. There are two basic missions associated with the Army Voting Assistance Program:

(1) The first mission, and primary focus of the program, is the traditional voting assistance provided to Soldiers, their family members, and overseas DA civilian employees and their family members. Individual voting assistance consists of unit Voting Assistance Officers (VAOs) providing technical guidance. Further assistance may be obtained by using the installation's chain of command: Unit VAOs, Senior Voting Assistance Officers (SVAOs), IVAOs, Army Voting Action Officer, the Army's Senior Service Voting Representative, and finally the Federal Voting Assistance Program, DoD.

(2) The second mission is to educate every Soldier about the importance and value of voting and the notify them of the opportunities they have to participate in the voting franchise, if they so desire.

b. Direct command involvement is required in order to meet these mission objectives and to ensure they are accomplished within the limits of law and policy.

4. Prohibited Practices:

The primary goal of the Army Voting Assistance Program is to actively encourage and assist Soldiers, as well as other eligible individuals, to register and vote without violating statute or regulation. The prohibitions below and in the references above must be strictly adhered to in order to meet this goal. Assistance in applying these guidelines while implementing the Voting Assistance Program may be obtained from your servicing Staff Judge Advocate's Office.

a. The use of lists to keep specific account of Soldiers' decisions regarding registration and voting is prohibited. The only reporting that this program requires is the number of Soldiers who participate in the voter assistance program – regardless of whether they choose to register or vote later. Therefore, by-name accounting is not necessary and will not be recorded.

b. Installation/Garrison Commanders will not permit the use of installation facilities by any candidate (either incumbents or new office seekers) or members of their staffs and campaign representatives for: political assemblies or meetings; media events; fund-raising dinners; parties or social events; causes, no matter who is the sponsor; press conferences; or similar activities. If a current government official who is also a candidate is visiting the installation for official reasons, Installation/Garrison Commanders must coordinate with the local PAO for guidance when planning the visit.

c. Installation/Garrison Commanders will decline requests for support to any political event which may imply association with any partisan group.

d. Unit VAOs will not engage in or support any activities that could be interpreted as associating the Department of the Army with any political causes or candidates.

e. Commissioned, Warrant, and Noncommissioned Officers of the Armed Forces shall not use military authority to influence or attempt to influence any other member to vote or not to vote, or to require any member to march to any polling place or place of voting. Such activity violates the criminal laws of the United States. This does not prohibit individuals in their personal capacities from discussing political issues or the candidates for public office; however, leaders must be cautious not to display undue influence over subordinates, even during informal conversations. For additional guidance on this issue, contact your servicing Staff Judge Advocate office.

f. Unit VAOs must be aware that the type of voting literature that may be distributed is very limited:

(1) DoD policy prohibits Active Duty personnel from distributing **ANY** campaign literature, whether you consider it partisan or not. Active Duty personnel will only distribute information relating to the process of registering to vote; i.e., "Voting Assistance Guide," FPCA, and FWAB.

(2) Neither DoD nor DA is authorized to collect or distribute voting information of a partisan nature. Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their eligible family members **MUST** obtain this type of information from other sources. Much of this information may be obtained from the DoD Voting Information Center (DOD VIC). Soldiers and DA civilians overseas are encouraged to call the DOD VIC at 1-800-438-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343 or DSN 425-1343. Toll free telephone numbers are listed by country on the Federal Voting Assistance Program web site at www.fvap.gov.

g. Voting Assistance Officers will **NOT** contact State and local officials or agencies about voting matters. They should contact the FVAP office for assistance if it is necessary to contact State or local offices. The FVAP office is the sole DoD representative for obtaining and distributing voting information from these officials.

h. Active duty Soldiers and Reserve component Soldiers on active duty are required to adhere to the policies in DoD Directive 1344.10 and AR 600-20. Department of the Army civilian employees must comply with the limitations on political activity in 5 C.F.R. Part 734 and JER, Chapter 6.

5. Responsibilities:

a. United States Army Human Resources Command (AHRC):

(1) The Adjutant General, AHRC, is designated as the Senior Army Voting Representative to ensure that the Army's Voting Assistance Program is administered throughout the Army. The Senior Army Voting Representative will appoint an Army Voting Action Officer, preferably a GS-12 or higher, to monitor the operation of the Voting Assistance Program.

(2) The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, implements the Army Voting Assistance Program and serves as the Voting Program Coordinator for the Service. The telephone number of the Voting Action Line is DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. The facsimile number DSN 221-4532 or commercial (703) 325-4532.

b. Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) and field activity agencies will:

- (1) Appoint, in writing, a VAO to administer and coordinate the Voting Assistance mission within the command for assigned Soldiers, DA civilians, and their eligible family members.
- (2) Provide voting assistance to assigned Soldiers as prescribed by AR 608-20.
- (3) Support the AVAP efforts by collecting the monthly metric reports (measures of success), status reports, and quarterly reports (VAO point of contact information) from the field activity agencies. HQDA principle officials will consolidate all reports and forward the consolidated reports to the Service Voting Action Officer. The status reports will be in a narrative format and will contain examples of events planned to publicize the importance of the voting franchise and opportunities for voters to register. Monthly status reports will be for the period Nov 07 through Nov 08.

c. Installation Management Command (IMCOM) will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, an SVAO to administer and coordinate the Voting Assistance mission within the command for assigned soldiers, DA civilians overseas, and their eligible family members.

(2) Appoint, in writing, a collateral duty civilian Installation Voting Assistance Officer (IVAO) at the GS-12 grade level (or equivalent) at each installation. This appointment will be for an 18-month period of September 2007 – May 2009. **The IVAO will receive consolidated monthly metric reports/measures of success from each Army command (ACOM) Army Service Component Command (ASCC), Direct reporting Unit (DRU) or separate units on the installation. The IVAO will forward these reports to the Service Voting Action Officer at U.S. Army Human Resources Command. NOTE: The IVAO will report non receipt of reports to the Service Voting Action Officer at U.S. Army Human Resources Command.** IVAOs must attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program training within 90 days of appointment. IMCOMs IVAO will coordinate with the Army Commands (ACOM), Army Service Component Command (ASCC) and Direct Reporting Units (DRU) Commanders to ensure a Voting Assistance Program is established on the installation. The

IVAO will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and executing all Voting activities at the installation level. Additionally, IVAOs will monitor special program weeks, coordinate setting up voting workshop locations, coordinate hanging voting banners, and ensure the U. S. Army Publishing Directorate Warehouse has an adequate supply of materials on hand to support the installation. The IVAO will ensure that continuity folders are maintained by each VAO, which contain all content and references leading to a successful voting assistance program. The IVAO will place emphasis on planned events and the overall success of the Armed Forces Voters Week in Aug 08, and Absentee Voters Week scheduled for Oct 08. IVAOs will incorporate the services of the Public Affairs Officer, Staff Judge Advocate, Publications Account Manager, and the Communications and Message centers to facilitate the opportunity to register and vote.

d. Army Commands (ACOM), Army Service Component Command (ASCC) and Direct Reporting Units (DRU) Commanders will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, a senior officer (Colonel or above or a civilian equivalent) as the Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage their respective command's Voting Assistance Program. The SVAO must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop during election years for Federal offices. All commands are required to forward monthly metric reports, monthly status reports and quarterly reports to the IVAO.

(2) Ensure that each subordinate senior mission and installation commander appoints Senior Voting Assistance Officers and alternate (military or civilian) to manage the overall subordinate program. The designated grade of the installation senior voting assistance officer (GS-12 or higher or Major or higher) is directed in the DoD Directive 1000.4 Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP). Commanders will ensure that the SVAO coordinates with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate so that the conduct of the voting assistance program remains within the limits of law and policy.

(3) Ensure the Command SVAOs maintain a listing of all subordinate installation SVAOs and their designated alternates. The following information will be included in the updated listing of SVAOs: Grade or title, name, address (mailing and e-mail), telephone number (commercial and DSN), facsimile number (commercial and DSN), and date attended FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop. The list must be updated quarterly and submitted to the IVAO NLT the 10th of each month starting 10 Nov 07 through 10 Oct 08. The IVAO will forward a consolidated report through their respective region who in turn will consolidate and forward to the Service Voting Action Officer at HQDA.

(4) Monitor subordinate installation's voting assistance programs throughout the election year. Direct major subordinate command support of the collateral duty civilian Installation Voting Assistance Officer (IVAO) in the accomplishment of his/her duties outlined in 5b2.

(5) Ensure each Soldier is provided FPCAs for themselves and their voting age family members before graduation from recruit training (CDR, TRADOC).

(6) Establish within the Command a Voting Assistance Officer network and communications capability to quickly disseminate voting information through the Command.

(7) Ensure the accomplishment of the in hand/electronic delivery of FPCAs required in paragraph 7a(2).

(8) Incorporate Voting Assistance Support into Personnel Assets Inventory (PAI) annual requirement.

e. Installation/Garrison Commanders will:

(1) Ensure that the voting assistance program is conducted within the legal limits discussed in paragraph 4 of these instructions, as well as the limits imposed by the referenced publications. Commanders will ensure that their Senior Voting Assistance Officer coordinates closely with their servicing Staff Judge Advocate and IMCOMs IVAO throughout the conduct of the program.

(2) Appoint in writing, an Installation Senior Voting Assistance Officer (SVAO) to manage their respective commands voting assistance program throughout the election year. Where possible, the Installation SVAO will be a DA civilian GS-12 or higher. If a military member is appointed as the Installation SVAO, that officer should hold the grade of MAJ or higher. An alternate SVAO should also be appointed. If the installation has no GS-12, or Major or above other than the assigned commander, then the next most senior officer, noncommissioned officer or civilian shall be appointed as the SVAO. All installation SVAO's must attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program training within 90-days of appointment. Installation SVAOs and VAOs should arrange to attend one of the workshops, utilizing the "Train the Trainer" type concept. At the completion of the workshop, the SVAOs and VAOs who attend will have the tools required to train the VAOs at their respective installation(s) who were unable to attend this session. The SVAO is the principal assistant to the Installation Commander and is responsible to the Commander to:

(a) Ensure Unit VAOs are trained to provide assistance to all Army voters including family members, and DA civilian employees and their family members overseas.

(b) Advise all CONUS SVAOs to follow their normal support supply channels to obtain their blank forms from the U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility located at the address as follows: U.S. Army Publications Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63114-6181. At a minimum, each VAO must have:

1. A copy of the Voting Assistance Guide (2008/2009).
2. Four FPCAs for each assigned Soldier and DA civilian stationed OCONUS.
3. One FWAB for each assigned Soldier and for each DA civilian stationed OCONUS.
4. Other promotional materials as required (see Appendix A).

(c) Ensure an installation voting assistance plan is established which reflects the guidance contained in these implementing instructions and that planning is accomplished on the installation to conduct, through the chain of command, the Armed Forces Voters Week in August 2008.

(d) Evaluate the effectiveness of the installation voting assistance program on a continual basis.

(e) Ensure periodic status reports on planning efforts, successes, problems, and recommendations are submitted to their command SVAOs to meet the requirements in paragraph 5b(2) above.

(3) Require that unit VAOs (First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above) are appointed, in writing, and that they attend the Federal Voting Assistance Program training within 90-days of appointment. **A junior grade may fill the position as an exception and it must be justified. The justification has to be submitted to the command level for approval.** Voting Assistance Officers must have retention in the unit through December 2008 and maintain a current listing of all unit VAOs.

(4) Ensure copies of FPCA are included in orientation packets for new and permanent change of station personnel.

(5) Evaluate the command's voting assistance programs on a continual basis.

(6) Conduct the Armed Forces Voters Week in August 2008. All Soldiers will be briefed on their right to vote and will be given every opportunity and encouragement to exercise that right consistent with the limitations listed in paragraph 4 of this guidance and in accordance with other policies and laws. Soldiers should receive at least one briefing or training session devoted to absentee registration and voting. The availability of voting information, supporting materials, personal assistance and the importance of the voting franchise will be stressed. Remember that keeping lists of Soldiers and recording their decisions regarding registering to vote and voting is prohibited and is unnecessary for this requirement.

(7) Emphasize the week of 31 Aug-7 Sep 08 as "Armed Forces Voters Week." This week should be used by commanders and unit VAOs to assist those who were not registered earlier and should be the culmination of the formal registration effort.

(8) Designate other days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting. Recommend a day around 4 July 2008 and other appropriate holidays.

(9) Emphasize the week of 12-18 Oct 08 as "Absentee Voters Week" to encourage the completion and the mailing of absentee ballots prior to the General election. Absentee

voters outside the U.S. should submit a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot during this week if they have not received their absentee ballot from their State.

(10) Ensure that installation telephone operators are provided the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of the installation SVAOs and all unit VAOs.

(11) Ensure that installation Public Affairs Officers coordinate voting information support materials through the Army Public Affairs channels.

(12) Ensure that The Adjutant General Directorate, AHRC, is notified immediately whenever a voter is denied the opportunity to vote in any State. The telephone number is (703) 325-4530 or DSN 221-4530 or email to alton.c.perry@conus.army.mil.

(13) Ensure that SVAOs specifically coordinate the services of the public affairs officer, Staff Judge Advocate, publications account manager, and communication and message centers to facilitate the opportunity to register and vote. See Appendix A for Voting Assistance Publications.

(14) Ensure that nonpartisan offers to assist in the installation's voting assistance program from on-post private organizations such as Family Readiness Groups, Boy/Girl Scouts and other youth groups, veteran's organizations, and service associations are accepted, when appropriate, and integrated into the installation's voting assistance program. These offers MUST BE coordinated with the servicing Staff Judge Advocate before acceptance to ensure that the offer complies with all provisions of law and policy.

(15) Designate at least one well-advertised fixed location on the installation where absentee voting materials and assistance are available to all military personnel, civilian employees and their family members. Locations may include legal assistance offices, family service centers, community centers, etc.

(16) Ensure voting assistance is provided to members of the Army National Guard and the Reserves in the event they are activated and serving within their subordinate commands whether in CONUS or OCONUS and to small and/or geographically separated units, rear detachments, Family Readiness/Support Groups, etc.

(17) Each Installation SVAO will provide notification to Unit VAO's and eligible absentee voters on the installation of the last date before a general Federal election by which absentee ballots must be mailed from that installation to reasonably be delivered in time to State and local election officials. Absentee ballots should be mailed NLT 14 days prior to the election if mailed in CONUS and NLT 14-30 days prior to the election if mailed from OCONUS.

(18) Establish an installation VAO network to quickly disseminate voting information throughout the installation.

(19) Incorporate Voting Assistance Support into Personnel Assets Inventory (PAI) annual requirement.

f. Unit commanders down to company and detachment level will:

(1) Appoint, in writing, unit VAOs in the grades of First Lieutenant/Sergeant First Class or above in all units with 25 or more permanently assigned members. The Directive provides guidance regarding the ratio of VAOs to assigned members within a unit. **The Services have given flexibility in meeting this requirement by OSD. OSD stated this maybe modified at the Service and or unit level to meet local conditions. The goal is to ensure coverage regardless of location. A junior grade may fill the position as an exception, however it must be justified. The justification has to be submitted to the respective command level for approval. If military members are not available, civilian equivalent may be used. As a minimum and maximum, the span of control for VAOs must be established.** An additional VAO should be appointed, in writing, for each 50 unit members above the 25 member base. When military personnel (including noncommissioned officers) are designated as voting assistance officers, they are authorized by DoD Directive 1000.4 to administer oaths in connection with voting registration and voting.

(2) Provide unit VAOs the necessary time and resources needed to perform their voting assistance duties.

(3) Provide Soldiers who desire to vote the maximum opportunity to do so. This occurs through junior officers and senior NCOs assisting their respective subordinates with their voting questions and problems throughout the election year. Remember, it is **ILLEGAL** for Commissioned, Warrant, and Noncommissioned Officers to use military authority to influence anyone to vote or not to vote. Leaders at all levels must understand the DoD goal is to eliminate problems/barriers that might prevent someone from voting and to provide every opportunity for Soldiers to register and vote if they so desire. The goal is NOT to pressure, cajole, or order Soldiers to register or to vote. Doing so not only violates DoD and Army policy, but violates the criminal laws of the United States.

(4) Encourage and assist Soldiers who are interested in registering to vote to do so as soon as possible. Authorize use to "priority" precedence when using DSN for voting assistance and allow access to command fax machines for transmission of election materials when it does not interfere with mission accomplishment.

(5) Ensure the unit members and their voting-age dependents have ready access to absentee voter registration, ballot requests and absentee submission information and deadlines. Additionally, any person appearing to need assistance in reading or understanding English language material should receive immediate assistance in the appropriate language.

(6) Train all Soldiers (including activated National Guard and Reserve component personnel) on absentee registration and voting procedures during years of elections for

Federal offices. All basic training and command courses shall include voting training and will advertise voting assistance programs to encourage junior Service members to register and subsequently vote and include instructions on voting rights and responsibilities and procedures on absentee registration and voting. Provide training and voting assistance for units preparing for deployment where voting materials and accessibility to register may be limited. Train all Reserve component personnel during years of elections for Federal offices on all aspects of the voting program, to include familiarity with the FPCA and FWAB.

(7) Remind Soldiers to send in a new FPCA whenever their mailing address changes and for those Soldiers who have filed an FPCA and subsequently are released from the Army, to inform their local election officials so that an absentee ballot is not mailed, if they desire to vote in person.

g. The Installation/Garrison Commanders are responsible for providing an active command information program concerning voting. They will:

(1) Ensure clear channels of communications are established throughout the installation to expedite voting information down to unit level.

(2) Direct internal information media to publicize all aspects of the 2008/2009 voting information program in a timely and effective manner (see Appendix B).

h. The SVAOs and VAOs are responsible to their commanders for coordinating all matters pertaining to the Army Voting Assistance Program at their respective level. Continuity folders must be maintained by each VAO containing all references leading to a successful voting assistance program.

i. Commanders at all levels will provide command emphasis and support to the Army Voting Assistance Program on a consistent and continuing basis and rate Voting Assistance Officers on the way they perform their voting assistance duties. Commanders shall establish the evaluation criteria for Voting Assistance Officer performance within their command.

j. Incorporate Voting Assistance Support into Personnel Assets Inventory (PAI) annual requirement.

6. Army Voter Registration Month (August 2008):

The Army Voter Registration Month will be the primary time to provide focus on the mission to educate Soldiers and to assist those who desire/need assistance in requesting their State ballots.

a. During August, commanders and their VAOs must ensure that all Soldiers have been given the opportunity to register and request a ballot from their State election officials. If the Soldier desires to register, they must do so in person or by using an FPCA. Information for

executing the FPCA, in all States and territories or possessions of the U.S., is found in the Voting Assistance Guide 2008-2009.

b. Program Structure. The Army Voting Assistance Plan divides the voting cycle into four distinct phases. These phases are outlined in detail in paragraph 7.

7. Coordinating Instructions:

The following instructions are phased to coincide with major events throughout the election cycle. It serves as a guide to be adapted and amplified as local circumstances dictate.

a. Phase I (1 September 2007 - October 2008):

(1) Appoint installation SVAOs and unit VAOs to serve throughout the General election of 2008. Ensure that all VAOs receive FVAP training and training regarding the legal and policy limits on political activities of uniformed service members and civilian employees. Servicing Staff Judge Advocates should be used to the maximum extent possible to provide this training.

(2) Commanders must ensure in hand or electronic delivery of FPCAs to all uniformed absentee voters (for them and their voting age family members) NLT 15 January of each year. This can be accomplished in unit formations, scheduled unit training or by email. Voting Assistance Officers, Commanders, and other leaders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, not to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(3) Order all voting materials as specified in Appendix A.

(4) Provide installation telephone operators with a directory containing the names, office telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of all unit VAOs on the installation and to ensure it is continuously updated.

(5) Commanders should review their command's voting assistance programs to ensure that the Army Voting Assistance Program is implemented as specified throughout these instructions.

(6) Commanders should begin their command's information programs about primary elections as directed by DOD and Army leadership. These information efforts should be repeated, as necessary, to inform and educate Soldiers and their family members to exercise their right to vote in primaries and general elections. Family members will be encouraged to participate in these programs.

(7) Commanders should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web

Site (www.fvap.gov) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations) which is available prior to publication and distribution of the 2008 - 2009 Voting Assistance Guide and any changes thereto.

(8) Inspectors General of the Military Services are required to review the voting assistance program annually at every level of command to ensure compliance with DoD regulations and public law and submit their reports to the DoD Inspector General by 31 January of the following year.

b. Phase II (1 December - October 2008):

(1) Voting Assistance Officers must attend a FVAP Voting Assistance Workshop.

(2) Concentrate efforts to provide absentee registration and voting assistance to Soldiers for State primary elections (January - December 2007).

(3) Order one FWAB per Soldier, their eligible family members and DA civilians in overseas areas. The FWAB may be used only under the conditions specified in the Voting Assistance Guide – 2008-2009 or by the individual States.

(4) Conduct the Army Voter Registration Month during August 2008. Installation commanders should make the FPCA available through schools, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(5) Commanders must ensure FPCAs are available to all Soldiers (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving outside the territorial limits of the United States NLT 15 August 2008. This must be accomplished NLT 15 August of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. Commanders, VAOs, and other leaders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this delivery is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the limitations in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, not to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(6) Emphasize “Armed Forces Voters Week” (week of 31 Aug-7 Sep 08) and “Absentee Voters Week (week of 12-18 Oct 08). Designate other special days to emphasize voting registration and the importance of voting, i.e. in July and September. Develop programs to support the objective of creating awareness of the process and requirements for Soldiers to register to participate in the general election. Publicize the importance of early action on the part of voters to obtain a ballot for the general election well in advance of election deadlines.

(7) Continue dissemination of information about the Voting Assistance Program throughout your installation.

c. Phase III (July 2008 - 4 November 2008):

(1) Continue to widely disseminate voting information to include schools, hospitals, reception battalions, and in-processing stations.

(2) Commanders must ensure FPCAs are available to all Soldiers (for them and their voting age family members) who are serving in the United States NLT 15 Sep 08. This must be accomplished NLT 15 September of even numbered years. This can be accomplished in unit formations or during scheduled unit training. VAOs and commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who might want them, NOT to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

(3) Unit VAOs should advise absentee voters serving in the United States that their absentee ballot must be mailed a minimum of 14-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State. Absentee voters outside the United States must mail their ballots a minimum of 14-30-days prior to the ballot return deadline set by their State.

(4) Unit VAOs should know how and when to use the SF 186 (FWAB) and recommend its use if the voter meets the criteria and does not receive the regular absentee ballot in sufficient time to vote and return it to be counted by the State election officials.

d. Phase IV (8 November 2008 - 31 December 2008):

(1) Assist, as requested, with post-election surveys of unit VAOs. The survey's findings will be used in formulating plans for future voting assistance programs and as a part of the Report on the Federal Voting Assistance Program.

(2) Provide an After-Action Report in the format specified by DoD.

8. Administration:

a. Voting Action Line. ACOMs, ASCCs and DRUs SVAOs and IMCOM's IVAOs who encounter difficulties in preparing and carrying out their voting assistance programs may address problems or questions to the Service Voting Action Officer by calling the Voting Action Line at DSN 221-4530 or commercial (703) 325-4530. SVAOs and IVAOs will establish and publicize the availability of a special telephone service, the "Voting Action Line," to provide rapid response to voting problems as they arise within their commands/installations. The Department of the Army's "Voting Action Line" is now operational to receive questions from 0800-1630 Eastern Time. After duty hours a voice mail system is available to record questions. A response will be provided as soon as possible.

b. In hand/electronic delivery of FPCA. Delivery of the FPCA is required as indicated in DODD 1000.4. The FPCA should be readily available to DA civilians and their eligible family members outside the territorial limits of the United States. SVAOs must ensure that unit VAOs develop plans to assure that at least one FPCA is delivered to each eligible

Soldier on the installation. Soldiers should also be given a FPCA for each of their eligible family members. The FPCA should be delivered to Soldiers on TDY or leave upon their return to their active unit. Voting Assistance Officers and Commanders must be cautious, however, and ensure that this is done in an informational way, not in a coercive way. (See the guidance in paragraph 4.) The idea is to get the forms to Soldiers who want them, NOT to coerce Soldiers to use the forms.

c. Legal Assistance. The VAOs should develop a working relationship with the installation or activity legal assistance office for help in determining legal residence for those voters who request such assistance. The Voting Assistance Guide 2008-2009, contains the required state information about residency, but rules are often complex or vague and vary widely from State to State. Legal assistance officers are often best able to provide advice on the more difficult residency questions which arise.

d. Electronic Transmission of Election Materials. Often, transmitting voting materials by mail prevents timely receipt and return of materials. When such conditions exist, possibly preventing an individual from voting, electronic transmission should be used. At Appendix B of the Voting Assistance Guide, 2008-2009, are complete details on the possibilities of using this method which is allowed by certain States.

Appendix

Essential Voting Materials (2008-2009)

A-1. Voting Assistance Guide 2008-2009

1. The Voting Assistance Guide 2008-2009 (Misc Pub 360-02) is the basic reference document of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and provides all voting assistance officers with necessary information to give potential voters the following assistance:

a. Explanation of current procedures for absentee registration and voting in each State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands.

b. Absentee registration and voting deadlines established by the States, territories, and other jurisdictions, along with dates of primary and general elections.

c. Addresses, including county seats and ZIP codes of election officials in each State, territory, and other jurisdictions.

2. The VAOs should encourage access to the Army Voting Assistance Program Webpage (<https://www.hrc.army.mil/tagd/pssd/psb/voting/votingindex.htm>) and FVAP Web Site (www.fvap.gov) for voting information. If World Wide Web access is not available, ensure distribution of allowable voting information (see paragraph 4 of this policy for limitations)

which is available prior to publication and distribution of the Voting Assistance Guide – 2008-2009 and any changes thereto.

A-2. Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

The FPCA, a postage-free form, is authorized by law for use by all eligible active duty Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members. Because there are differences in the treatment accorded to the FPCA by various States and other jurisdictions, the Voting Assistance Guide - 2008/2009 should be consulted to determine how each particular jurisdiction authorizes use of the FPCA by absentee voters. The IVAO should ensure that the publications account manager has an adequate inventory of the FPCAs on hand, or on order.

A-3. Standard Form 186, Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)

1. The FWAB (SF 186) is authorized by law and may be used in general elections for Federal office by voters who make timely application for, and do not receive, regular absentee ballots.

2. Those who wish to use the FWAB must have met the following criteria:

a. The application of a voter for a regular absentee ballot must have been received by the local election official at least 30 days before the general election.

b. The FWAB may be submitted from all locations. Check Misc Pub 360-02 for details.

c. The FWAB must be received by the local election official no later than the deadline for receipt of regular absentee ballots under state law.

3. All installations should stock a sufficient supply of these ballots for use by voters as outlined above.

A-4. Other voting information materials

1. Poster. DoD voting posters are available for requisitioning as indicted below.

2. Public Service Announcements will be available for voting assistance officers to educate Soldiers about the processes they need to follow if they want to participate during the 2008 general election. Their availability will be announced prior to their distribution to SVAOs, IVAOs and VAOs.

A-5. Ordering Voting Materials

1. Voting Materials can only be ordered at this website: www.apd.army.mil. Instructions for ordering from USAREUR are in paragraph c below. The correct nomenclature for each item plus the correct U/I:

- Voting Assistance Guide (Misc. Pub 360-02) - Ea.
- Motivational Poster - DOD P-113 – Be Smart. Do Your Part. Vote! - Ea.
- 2008 Presidential and State Primary Election Calendar - Ea.
- Registration and Absentee Ballot Request - Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) SF 76 - Ea.
- Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) SF 186 - Ea.

2. The customer service number for the Publications Distribution Operations Facility-St. Louis is (314) 592-0910 or DSN 892-0910.

3. Voting materials ordered from the USAREUR Publications Office must be ordered from: <https://aepubs.army.mil> using the nomenclatures above. The point of contact numbers are DSN 314-384-6881/6882/6883/6884.

Appendix B

Information Support Plan (2008-2009)

B-1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to focus Commanders, Personnel Officers (G-1s/S-1s)), and Voting Assistance Officers' (VAO) efforts in providing voting assistance to Soldiers, overseas DA civilians (to include NAF civilians, Contractors and Retirees overseas), and their family members for the 2008 general elections.

B-2. Scope

This plan applies to ACOMs, ASCCs, DRUs and Installation/Garrison Public Affairs Officers.

B-3. Applicability

1. This plan should be aimed at all Soldiers, but primarily first time voters and those using the absentee voting process for the first time and their family members.
2. ACOMs, ASCCs and DRUs and IVAOs will build upon this plan to produce their educational and promotional materials.

B-4. Situation

1. This is a general election for President of the United States.
2. We must communicate to our Soldiers the importance of voting and the process they must follow if they desire to participate in the general election including the primaries throughout the 2008 election year.
3. The number one voter slogan for the 2008 general election year is: "Be Smart. Do Your Part. Vote!" This slogan, in addition to other slogans found on the front page of Misc. Pub 360-02 and throughout the pamphlet, should be used during the 2008 elections to encourage and motivate the Army's target market voters.
4. The Armed Forces Information Service (AFIS) will likely conduct specialized, multimedia activities emphasizing registration for voting in primary and general elections for the entire Army. In addition to distributing news releases and related features, the Armed Forces Radio Television Service (AFRTS) may broadcast public service announcements and features. Army News Service (ARNEWS) will disseminate articles to newspapers worldwide. DoD Pentagon channel, Armed Forces Network (AFN), Soldiers Radio, Television (SRTV) and Army and Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs Office (AAFES) will also be involved in disseminating radio and television products worldwide. Soldiers Magazine will provide information regarding voting to commanders for their use in educating Soldiers about the process to follow to register and vote.
5. The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office will prepare releases to alert voters of special election dates.
6. The FVAP will prepare voting information on State and local primary elections and continue operation of the Voting Information Center (VIC). The VIC provides a 24-hour recorded service with news and information on elections, candidates and issues. Anyone may call the VIC on 1-800-VOTE (8683), (703) 588-1343, DSN 425-1343 or any of the toll-free numbers found in the Voting Assistance Guide Misc. Pub 360-02, or under the FVAP website www.fvap.gov under toll-free Ombudsman Service.
7. August is "**Army Voter Registration Month.**" During this month, every Soldier and overseas civilian (to include NAF civilians and retirees overseas) will be given a Standard Form 76, Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) which will allow them to register to vote. Local commands may design an "event," within the limits of law and policy, to accomplish this activity.

B-5 Objectives

1. To provide voter information which will educate Soldiers and overseas DA civilians (to include NAF and Contractor employees overseas), and their family members regarding the process they need to follow if they desire to register and vote.

2. To educate Soldiers, DA civilians overseas, and their family members on the mechanics of voting. See Misc Pub 360-02
3. To ensure that all Soldiers and overseas DA civilians have the opportunity to register and vote.

B-6. Concept

1. Through command information print and electronic media, all VAOs will support the command's efforts to educate Soldiers, overseas DA civilians, and their family members about the systems that exist for them to register and vote, even when they are away from their home state.
2. The following guidance and communication ideas should be incorporated in command information programs:
 - a. As stated in paragraph B-3a above, appeal to first term Soldiers who may be eligible to vote for the first time. Challenge them to educate themselves on the voting process and assist those who desire to do so with registering to vote.
 - b. Public Service Announcements (PSAs)/pictures could show NCOs teaching first term Soldiers the mechanics of absentee registration and voting.
3. The following "Good Ideas" should be communicated throughout the command to encourage voter participation among the target market Soldiers." **All programs will be reviewed by the servicing Staff Judge Advocate to ensure that the effort complies with law and policy.**
 - a. Conduct an Oath Reaffirmation Ceremony, followed by registration opportunities.
 - b. Set up colorful, patriotic voting displays in high traffic areas (chapels, housing areas, child care facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, exchanges, clothing sales stores, welcome centers, commissaries, theaters, golf courses, bowling facilities, hobby shops, shopettes, etc.).
 - c. Use unit organizational days, command picnics, and other important events unique to the command to publicize voter registration and request for ballots. Set up other Special Days to focus on registration and voting (suggest a day around the 4th of July and other appropriate holidays).
 - d. Publicize Army Voter Registration Month by e-mail, flyers and posters. The flyers and posters could be placed in local banking facilities, Officer and NCO Clubs, NAF facilities, museums, Officers and NCO Wives Clubs, on-post theaters, exchanges, shopettes, gasoline stations, hobby and craft shops, gymnasiums, etc.

e. Publicize memorandums and letters from commanders or SVAOs to Soldiers regarding their opportunity and right to vote. Commanders must be cautious to ensure that their letter complies with the law and policies, especially the limits on commissioned officers influencing the voting of a member of the Armed Forces. The letter should be reviewed by their servicing Staff Judge Advocate prior to publication.

f. Publicize the location of where FPCAs may be obtained for registration and for requesting a ballot. This publication should also include all unit voting assistance officers who are trained to assist in executing the FPCA.

The above suggestions are just some of the “Good Ideas” commanders may use to increase voter participation. Commanders and VAOs can use any patriotic theme that is in good taste and that complies with law and policy to reach the Army’s target market.

Appendix C

Required Reports (2008-2009)

<u>SUSPENSE DATE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>REFERENCE PARA</u>
30 Oct 07	Quarterly update to Listing of SVAOs & IVAOs	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
1 Nov 07	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Oct 07)	5b (3),5c(2), 5d(1)
6 Dec 07	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Nov 07)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)

7 Jan 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Dec 07) Quarterly Update to Listing of SVAOs & IVAOs	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
7 Feb 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Jan 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
10 Mar 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Feb 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
11 Apr 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Mar 08) Quarterly Update to Listing of SVAOs & IVAOs	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
9 May 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Apr 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
9 Jun 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (May 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
10 Jul 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Jun 08) Quarterly Update to Listing of SVAOs & IVAOs	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
11 Aug 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Jul 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
10 Sep 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Aug 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
10 Oct 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Sep 08) Quarterly Update to Listing of SVAOs & IVAOs	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
10 Nov 08	Monthly Status/Metric Report (Oct 08)	5b(3),5c(2), 5d(1)
5 Jan 09	After Action Report	Para 7d(2)

NOTE: Additional reports may be required and instructions will be forwarded separately.

BE SMART. DO YOUR PART. VOTE!